



Terry Barnett  
President & CEO

Novartis Corporation  
608 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10020

The Honorable Dennis Hastert  
Speaker of the House  
US House of Representatives  
H-232  
Washington, DC 20515

May 19, 2005

Dear Mr Speaker,

I am writing on behalf of Novartis Corporation to express our strong support for the Central American Free Trade Agreement. Novartis Corporation is one of the world's leading research-based pharmaceutical companies. Based in Basel, Switzerland and operating in over 140 countries, we employ more than 22,000 Americans across the US in all facets of pharmaceutical research, production, distribution and sales. In addition to pharmaceuticals, we have core businesses in consumer health, generics, eye-care, and animal health.

As a leader in health care, our fundamental goal is saving lives and bringing new hope to patients across the globe. The CAFTA, with its strong patent and data protection provisions, will help to strengthen consumers' access to medicines. Having strong intellectual property protections gives research-based companies like Novartis the confidence and incentive to launch our new, innovative products in markets that support free trade and property rights.

Beyond expanded opportunities for the industry in the Central American market and the benefits to patients, the CAFTA will also promote greater prosperity in the region. It is well documented that countries that make trade a pillar of their economies have grown more strongly and have greater wealth than those that restrict access to their markets. It is my firm belief that the free trade agreement will strengthen social, economic, and political progress in the region.

The CAFTA deserves widespread support, and I hope that the Congress will move quickly to put it into force. Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Barnett', written over a horizontal line.

Terry Barnett